

Amendments to the Abstract:

Please replace paragraph the abstract with the following amended paragraph:

A routing device is disclosed. ~~The routing device includes~~ including an operating system kernel, a virtual router residing external to the ~~operating system~~ kernel, a router manager configured to manage the virtual router, an application residing external to the virtual router, and a number of physical interfaces is disclosed. The application ~~is able to~~ selectively interacts with the virtual router and the ~~operating system~~ kernel on a dynamic basis ~~in order to have the virtual router and the operating system kernel, which~~ perform a number of tasks for the application. The virtual router ~~further~~ includes a routing protocol stack configured to handle a number of routing protocols, a number of interface drivers configured to communicate with corresponding physical interfaces, an Internet Protocol (IP) IP stack configured to interact with the routing protocol stack and perform a forwarding function via the interface drivers, the IP stack having a forwarding information table, ~~information from which is used to perform the forwarding function;~~ and a socket layer having a corresponding socket API ~~application programming interface, the socket layer configured to facilitate interactions between the IP stack and one or more socket applications, such as, the routing protocol stack and other external applications. The remote socket application programming interface is used to facilitates communications with the socket layer. The IP stack of the virtual router resides external to the operating system kernel. The operating system kernel further includes an associated socket layer, the socket layer having a corresponding socket application programming interface. The application is able to communicates with the operating system kernel via the associated socket layer using the corresponding socket application programming interface to have the operating system kernel perform one or more tasks.~~